The background of the entire page is a photograph of a vast, flat, snow-covered landscape, likely an Arctic coastal plain. The snow is bright white and covers the ground completely. In the distance, a flat horizon line separates the snow from a clear, light blue sky. A bright sun is visible in the upper right corner of the sky, creating a lens flare effect. The overall scene is desolate and expansive.

*Alaska's
Arctic Coastal Plain:
The Key to America's
Energy Security*

Senator Frank H. Murkowski

“We can do it responsibly.”



We're the Alaska Native people of the North Slope, and despite what you may have been told, a lot of us support responsible oil and gas development in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

About 6,500 of us live in small communities on the Arctic Slope.

We've watched the petroleum industry operate in the Prudhoe Bay area for more than 30 years, and if the companies discover oil in ANWR's coastal plain, we think they'll develop it with care for the environment.

We hope to be partners with the industry, in fact. Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, our Native regional corporation for the Arctic in which we're shareholders,

owns subsurface rights in 94,000 acres of ANWR's coastal plain. If the rest of the plain is opened our lands can be explored too (federal law prohibits us from developing our lands until Congress approves exploration on the rest of the coastal plain.)

Our neighbors to the south talk sour grapes, however. Indian groups who live south of ANWR say they oppose development on our lands. But is that because they were unlucky when oil companies didn't find oil on their lands, after they tried to lease them?

The fact is that oil development has brought many benefits to the people of northern Alaska. Living conditions were difficult in our villages before the oil compa-

nies came. We didn't have much in the way of schools or basic public services. But thanks to the industrial tax base created by the oil fields, our local government is able to offer many excellent public services. Thanks to oil development on the North Slope, we have opportunities we couldn't have dreamed of 30 years ago.

But development of ANWR's coastal plain is important for the country, not just for us. America is going to need that oil, sooner than we think.

So don't let some people claim to speak for all Alaska Natives. If you want to know our opinions, come and ask us. We want ANWR developed responsibly, and we know it can be done.

Wildlife and Industry: Sharing the Tundra

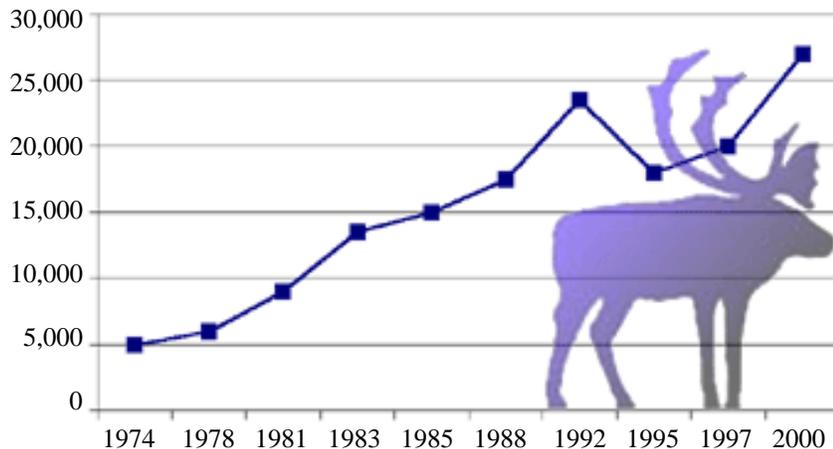


Are the caribou affected by oil development on the North Slope?



Are caribou affected by oil development on the North Slope? It would appear not, based on scientists' observations. The Central Arctic Herd, which uses the area around Prudhoe Bay, has tripled in population since oil development started in the early 1970s. There are four major caribou herds in northern Alaska. Besides the Porcupine and Central Arctic herds, there is the Western Arctic Herd, which is more than twice the size of the Porcupine Herd, and the smaller Teshekpuk Lake herd. Populations of these herds rise and fall by natural cycles. Three decades of oil and gas activity in the central North Slope has had no apparent impact.

Central Arctic Herd Population

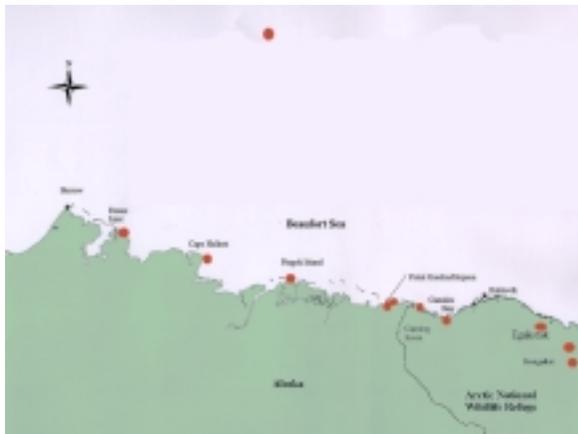


What about the Polar Bears?

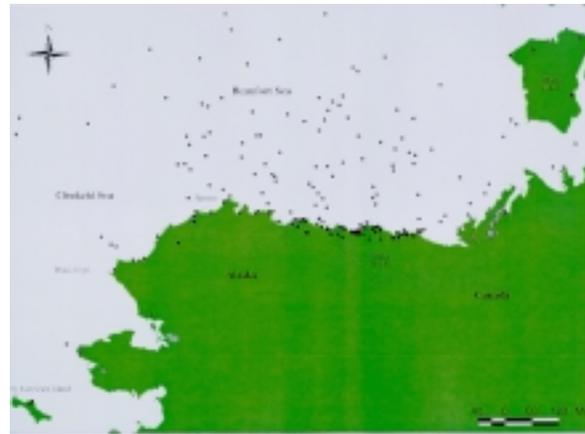


Alaska polar bears spend little time on land. Throughout most of the year, most Beaufort Sea polar bears are closely associated with sea ice. Sea ice is the habitat of ringed seals which are the predominant prey of polar bears. Polar bears also prey on bearded seals and occasionally belugas and walrus. While some bears become stranded onshore during summer when the shore ice melts and pack ice blows far offshore, the bears generally stay with the ice when it retreats in the summer. In the fall, some bears move near shore to feed on remains of beached carcasses, especially of bowhead whales taken by whalers.

In late October or November, some of the pregnant females move near shore to dig dens in deep snow drifts on the fast ice, or on barrier islands and land, while the majority den on the drifting pack ice. The pregnant females give birth to one to occasionally three cubs in December or January, and remain in the dens until April. Mothers with new cubs remain near the dens for up to a couple of weeks, before venturing onto the sea ice to hunt seals. Cubs remain with their mothers for 28 months.



Polar bear den sites 2000 - 2001.



Historic polar bear denning sites.

Development With Minimal Environmental Impact



An oil drilling pad on the North Slope during the winter.



In the summer, after exploration, little remains with no damage to the tundra.

WHICH ONE IS THE REAL ANWR?



The one on the *right*, right? Majestic mountains. Sweeping panoramas. The Serengeti of the North. The last remaining Arctic ecosystem. Pristine. Untouched. Home to millions of animals. Caribou, bears, wolves, muskox.

Well, you're mostly correct. Eight million acres of The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) looks just like that picture. But that land is already designated as Wilderness. And over 9.5 million more acres are classified as a National Wildlife Refuge. No one can touch that land, ever. That 17.5 million acres is off limits to any kind of development. In fact, combined with the rest of the land designated as Wilderness in Alaska, we're talking about an area the size of four or five States in the Lower 48. Alaska has more than 60% of all federally-designated Wilderness lands.

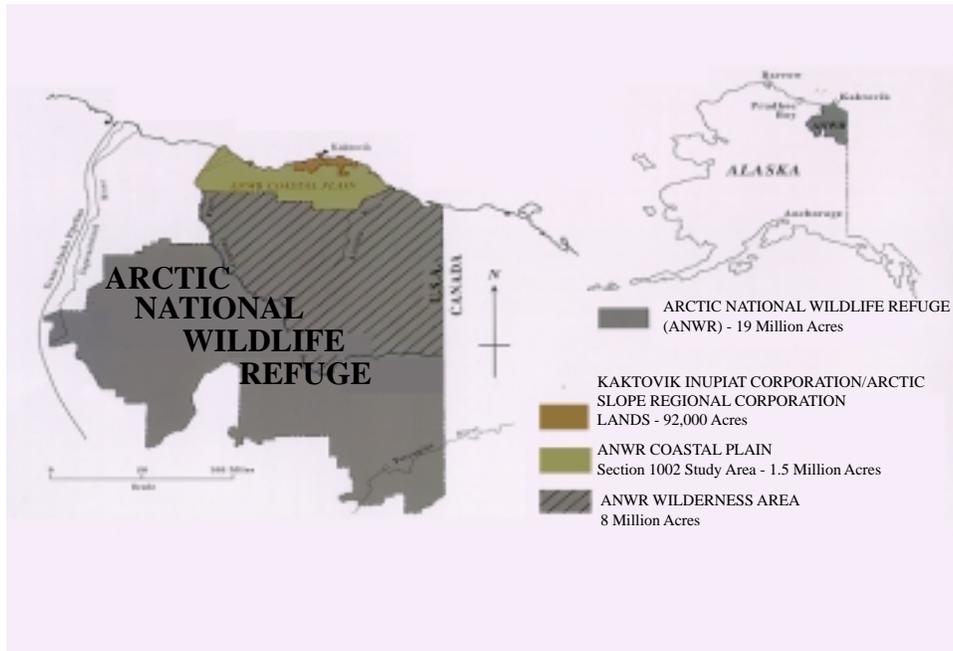
Look again at the picture on the left. And listen to some facts.

These facts aren't as pretty or as emotionally appealing. But they are important for anyone involved in the ANWR debate. On the coastal plain, the Arctic winter lasts for 9 months. It is dark continuously for 56 days in midwinter. Temperatures with the wind chill can reach -110 degrees F. It's not pristine. There are villages, roads, houses, schools, and military installations. It's not a unique Arctic ecosystem. The coastal plain is only a small fraction of the 88,000 square miles that make up the North Slope. The same tundra environment and wildlife can be found throughout the circumpolar Arctic regions. The 1002 Area is flat. That's why they call it a plain.

This third picture is also ANWR. It is the city of Kaktovik. This so-called last "undisturbed ecosystem" contains 92,000 acres of Native lands, including the City of Kaktovik, which has 223 residents and all of their attendant housing, schools, stores, boats, airstrips, power lines and a variety of other modern day facilities. The military's Barter Island Dew Line radar station is also near by.



How Big is ANWR?



The 19 million acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) lies in the northeast corner of Alaska. The entire refuge lies north of the Arctic Circle and 1,300 miles south of the North Pole.

The Coastal Plain area, comprising 1.5 million acres on the northern edge of ANWR, is bordered on the north by the Beaufort Sea, on the east by the U.S. Canadian border, and on the west by the Canning River. The Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation and Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (both Alaska Native corporations) own 94,000 acres in the Coastal Plain surrounding the village of Kaktovik.

At its widest points, the Coastal Plain is about 100 miles across and about 30 miles deep and covers an area slightly larger than the state of Delaware. Along the coastal area, the plain is an almost featureless expanse, barren and dotted with thousands of unconnected small ponds; the area to the south becomes gently rolling, treeless hills which merge into foothills and then into the northern edges of the Brooks Range. There is a Native population of about 220 residents at Kaktovik, a village on Native owned lands at Barter Island, adjacent to the Coastal Plain and within the boundaries of ANWR.

Size of ANWR relative to U.S. states:

1. ANWR	19.5 million
<i>ANWR Area Closed to Development</i>	17.5 million
2. West Virginia	15.5
3. Maryland	6.6
4. Vermont	6.1
5. New Hampshire	5.9
6. Massachusetts	5.3
7. New Jersey	4.9
8. Hawaii	4.1
9. Connecticut	3.2
<i>ANWR Area proposed for exploration</i>	1.5 million
10. Delaware	1.3
11. Rhode Island	700,000 acres

ANWR: Fact vs. Fiction

Over the years there have been a host of misconceptions about oil development on the Arctic coastal plain. Here are some of the most common:

Myth: There's only a 200-day supply there, so why bother.

Fact: The truth is that the latest U.S. Geological Survey estimates are that the entire "1002 Area" contains up to 16 billion barrels of recoverable oil. If found, this oil could replace all of our imports from Saudi Arabia for more than 30 years! The reserve could prevent our dependence on foreign oil from getting any worse for decades. Rather than being 58% dependent like we are now, it could cut our dependence to around 50%, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Myth: They want to destroy the last pristine wilderness along Alaska's coast, even though 95% of the area is already open to oil development.

Fact: The truth is that only 14 percent of the whole 1,500-mile Arctic coastal plain in Alaska is open to oil exploration today. Estimates are upon discovery a major oil field could be developed using modern technology, affecting only a tiny 2,000-acre sliver of the 1.5-million-acre "1002 Area" of the Arctic coastal plain — one-hundredth of a percent of the entire 19-million-acre ANWR area. Remember that 8 million acres of the refuge are in permanent wilderness and roughly another 9.5 million acres are classified as normal refuge. Only a part of the Arctic coastal plain — the "1002 Area" was left open for possible oil and gas development.

Myth: Oil drilling would affect the caribou.

Fact: There is absolutely no indication that environmentally responsible exploration will harm the 129,000-member Porcupine caribou herd. In fact, the history over the past 26 years at neighboring Prudhoe Bay shows the opposite. There the Central Arctic caribou herd has more than tripled in size, from 6,000 animals in 1978 to 19,700 today. Caribou will flourish as they have throughout Alaska, where caribou outnumber people three to two. No hunting by non-Natives will be allowed.

Myth: Drilling would destroy the Native Gwich'in culture.

Fact: The fear that Arctic development will harm the caribou and the Gwich'in culture is groundless. Given the strict controls planned to prevent disruption to the herd's summer calving grounds nothing will prevent the caribou from passing close enough to the Gwich'ins — protecting their yearly hunt. The Gwich'ins concern for oil development certainly seems recent. Just 15 years ago they issued a request for proposals to lease their 1.79 million acres of land for oil development. Nowhere did they require restrictions to protect the caribou. Only when no oil was found on their lands did the Gwich'ins oppose oil work.

Myth: The coastal plain is America's last wilderness and must be protected.

Fact: Alaska is already well protected. Less than 1 percent of Alaska currently is in private ownership and available for development. Alaska already has 192 million acres of parks, refuges, preserves and conservation system units, including 58 million acres of designated wilderness — 61 percent of all American wilderness. Wilderness in Alaska already covers an area that equals all of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia and Maryland. Further, in the coastal plain lies the Village of Kaktovik and its 222 residents, as well as a number of old radar sites.



Arctic Tundra

Myth: Canada has protected their wildlife, we should do the same.

Fact: Canada finally created a national park, but did so only after extensive exploration failed to find oil. Canadians on their Arctic coastal plain drilled 89 exploratory wells and extended the Dempster Highway from Dawson to Inuvik, cutting through the center of the Porcupine caribou herd's migration route. Such development did not harm the herd.



Kaktovik, Alaska

Myth: America doesn't need to open the plain while it allows exports of some of Alaska's oil.

Fact: No oil is being exported from Alaska. It is true that Congress in 1995 finally repealed a 1973 prohibition that had prevented any Alaska North Slope oil from being exported overseas. America for four years has exported a tiny amount of oil, about 5 percent, only oil that was excess to British Petroleum's West Coast refinery needs. But with the merger of British Petroleum-Amoco and ARCO, Phillips Petroleum has taken over ARCO Alaska's oil and facilities and ended the need for exports. This is thus no longer an issue. For the record a study by the General Accounting Office last year confirmed that lifting the export ban produced twice as much new oil in America as exported and did so without any observable price hikes on consumers on the West Coast. (Source: Alaskan North Slope Oil: Limited Effects of Lifting Export Ban on Oil and Shipping Industries and Consumers, July 1999, GAO-RCED-99-191.)

Myth: Producing more oil would simply cause Americans to buy more gas-guzzling cars and defeat energy conservation efforts.

Fact: America needs to be more energy efficient and to develop renewable, alternative fuels. But even with increased energy efficiency and conservation U.S. energy demands are forecast to increase by 19 percent in this decade and by 30 percent by 2020. By then America will be producing just 5.26 million barrels of oil a day if we continue on our current trend — being forced to import 65 percent of our energy needs, according to the non-partisan Energy Information Administration. We will be needing to dock 30 giant foreign-flagged supertankers a day — more than 10,000 a year — to import the oil we need. That creates much more environmental risk than developing our own resources.

Myth: The vast majority of Americans oppose disturbing the Alaska Arctic.

Fact: While there is a lot of misinformation about oil development in northern Alaska, Americans support responsible development when they know the facts about it. A poll by Gordon S. Black Corp. found that 56% support ANWR leasing, 37 % oppose it and 7 % were undecided in a poll taken before the recent sharp rise in fuel prices. Americans want to protect the environment, but 74% support efforts to produce oil and natural gas resources within America. Alaskans do support it. The entire Congressional Delegation, the state's Senate and House, the Governor and 78% of residents of the village of Kaktovik, the Native village within the coastal plain, support development.

Myth: Prudhoe Bay has been littered with chemical and oil spills, the Arctic having been despoiled by some 17,000 spills since the 1970s.

Fact: While some have claimed that oil development at Prudhoe Bay has harmed the environment, the truth is that Alaska's Arctic slope remains clean and unpolluted by oil. The few oil and chemical spills have almost always been confined to frozen gravel pads where they have been easily cleaned up. In 1993, for example, there were more than 160 "spills" on the North Slope involving nearly 60,000 gallons — the highest level of spills in the 1990s. But only two spills involved oil and all but 10 gallons were into secondary containment structures and were easily cleaned up. Prudhoe Bay is by far the finest oil field in the world — bar none!

Myth: Alaskans are so “wealthy” they don’t need to have ANWR opened.

Fact: Alaska is far from a wealthy state. It is true that the state has a “permanent fund” — the savings from a quarter of the leases, royalties and bonus payments the state has received as a result of development of the Prudhoe Bay oil field. The fund now stands at about \$27 billion and currently pays all state residents a yearly dividend, about \$2,000 per person. But Alaska citizens are expected to use their dividends to pay for services that might otherwise be provided by government (thus letting individuals make spending decisions at the local level rather than at the state level). And Alaska, the highest cost-of-living state in the nation and one of the last states to join the union, has billions of dollars of unmet infrastructure and social service needs — no roads cross most of Alaska — and sports the most fragile economy of any state in the Union.

Alaska always has been dependent on resource industries for its economy. While tourism is still growing, the Administration has been actively seeking to fell the state’s timber industry. It has done nothing to promote a rebirth of its historic mining industry, and while our fishery harvests continue at an all-time high, prices for our fish are dropping. The simple fact is that oil accounts for far more than half of Alaska’s gross product, and without future oil development Alaska’s economy will sicken, forcing more and more Alaskans back onto the federal welfare dole.

Alaska’s timber industry has fallen 62 percent (based on employment) in the past decade. Its oil and gas industry has lost 21 percent of its jobs in the same period, and its mining industry is down 16.5 percent. The state’s per capita income is 20th among the states, but ranks 2.7 percent below the national average. The state’s gross product is in decline having fallen to \$22 billion from \$23.9 billion in inflation adjust numbers since 1991. And further proof is that some 32,000 young Alaskans (aged 20-34) have left the state in the past eight years in search of higher paying employment.

That is particularly upsetting since the state’s rural areas still suffer from enormous sanitation and health needs, estimated at more than \$1.3 billion — the state’s rural, Native villages often sporting 19th Century water and sewer services. Forcing predominately Alaska Natives back into a lifestyle of government dependence for no justifiable reason shows a callous disregard for the aspirations of all Americans.

Myth: Opening the coastal plain would destroy the “biological heart” of the wildlife refuge.

Fact: This is the most farfetched criticism of permitting oil exploration on parts of the 8 percent of the wildlife refuge that front the Arctic ocean. It assumes that opening the refuge would harm the Arctic Porcupine caribou herd. But the herd only moves into the area in about three of every 10 years and only from early June into July. The legislation pending would prevent any drilling or development activity during the caribou calving season to prevent any disruption to the herd. The real proof that the coastal plain could be opened without harm to wildlife and the environment is that Alaskan Eskimos have lived in the Far North for tens of thousands of years, surviving on the flat, treeless, generally barren and generally frozen coastal plain. Their culture is based on a deep reverence for the land. They depend not just on the caribou of the plain, but the whales of the offshore waters. The Eskimo inhabitants of Kaktovik, who depend on subsistence to eke out a living in the Far North, would not be the biggest supporters of oil exploration unless they were absolutely convinced from their experience at Prudhoe Bay that oil development can be done safely without harm to their land, the wildlife they depend on and their heritage. By a recent poll 78 percent of Kaktovik residents support development.

Myth: Oil exploration would destroy the habitat of polar bears.

Fact: Alaska has healthy stocks of polar bears, estimated at around 2,000. The Administration has positively identified only 15 polar bear dens on the entire coastal plain over an 11-year period. That’s just one or two dens a year. Given that very little of the denning occurs on land — most on the Arctic ice pack — development certainly will not affect polar bears.



Alaska Native from Kaktovik